

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) - Led by U.S. Representatives Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX), Tom Udall (D-NM), and Todd Platts (R-PA), a broad, bipartisan coalition today introduced the first Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) amendment to be brought to the House Rules Committee for potential consideration during debate on the Energy package this week.

"We are extremely pleased to announce that with the effort of our colleague Ciro Rodriguez, we bring an achievable and effective Renewable Electricity Standard to the House of Representatives," said Tom Udall (D-NM). "A 15 percent federal standard brings even more support from diverse regions of the country, further demonstrating the broad support for establishing the first ever federal standard of this kind."

"Setting a Renewable Electricity Standard for the United States is a bold step towards energy independence and a cleaner energy future -- one that I am proud to advocate for. A Renewable Electricity Standard will create thousands of new jobs and result in billions of dollars in investments in rural communities across the country," said Ciro Rodriguez (D-TX). "Texas has always been a leader in energy production and with the vast renewable energy potential in our State we will be at the forefront of our nation's renewable energy future."

"I am pleased to be a part of this growing coalition of Members and outside organizations that are committed to advancing the cause of renewable energy and lessening our dependence on foreign energy sources," said Todd Platts (R-PA).

The Udall-Platts-Rodriguez amendment would create a federal standard requiring electric utilities to provide 15 percent of their electricity from wind, solar and other renewable energy sources by 2020. The first increase is set for 2010, gradually increasing thereafter to meet a 2020 goal.

Suppliers can meet these requirements by purchasing credits from other entities who have obtained credits by producing renewable energy. It also allows utilities to bank credits for three years and to borrow credits from up to three years in the future.

Municipal and other publicly owned power plants and rural electric coops would be exempted from the requirements.

The coalition of sponsors who have been successfully working to bring support for the House passage of an RES are Representatives Mark Udall, Diana DeGette, Frank Pallone, Chris Van Hollen and Henry Waxman.

"A 15 percent national renewable electricity standard is a significant goal while also not overly burdening the states. Support for the amendment has grown by leaps and bounds over the last few weeks, and with a consensus 15 percent standard, we have every reason to believe that the broad benefits of the RES will attract even more support," said Mark Udall, cochair of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus in the House of Representatives.

"After discussions with our colleagues from both sides of the aisle and across the country, our coalition has crafted an amendment that reflects our shared commitment to clean energy," said Energy and Commerce Committee Vice Chair Diana DeGette. "Inaction is no longer an option."

"To really tackle the challenge of global warming, we need to wean ourselves off our addiction to fossil fuels," Pallone said. "Our amendment provides an efficient, market-based way of moving ourselves towards sustainable, clean energy and ending this addiction."

"I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this important legislation," said Congressman Chris Van Hollen. "Whether you care about climate change, energy independence, or just saving money on your energy bill, a Renewable Electricity Standard will help get you there."

Almost half of the nation's states have an RES in place. The amendment preserves the authority of the states to implement a higher RES standard and protects the higher standards already in place.

The legislation is actively supported by numerous organizations, including the Union of Concerned Scientists, National Farmers Union, the American Wind Energy Association, United Steelworkers Union, National Venture Capital Association, League of Conservation Voters, US Public Interest Research Group, National Audubon Society, the League of Conservation Voters, the Sierra Club and many more.

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